

MONSIEUR BEUCAIRE

By Booth Tarkington

CHAPTER VI.

In the outer room, Winterset, unable to find Lady Mary, and supposing her to have joined Lady Rellerton, disposed of his negus, then approached the two visitors to pay his respects to the young prince, whom he discovered to be a stripling of seventeen, arrogant-looking, but pretty as a girl. Standing beside the Marquis de Mirepoix—a man of quiet bearing—he was surrounded by a group of the great, among whom Mr. Nash naturally counted himself. The Beau was felicitating himself that the foreigners had not arrived a week earlier, in which case he and Bath would have been detected in a piece of gross ignorance concerning the French nobility—making much of de Mirepoix's ex-barber.

"Tis a lucky thing that fellow was got out of the way," he ejaculated, under cover.

"Thank me for it," rejoined Winterset.

An attendant begged Mr. Nash's notice. The head bailiff sent word that Beaucaire had long since entered the building by a side door. It was supposed Mr. Nash had known of it, and the Frenchman was not arrested, as Mr. Molyneux was in his company, and said he would be answerable for him. Consternation was so plain on the Beau's trained face that the Duke leaned towards him anxiously.

"The villain's in, and Molyneux hath gone mad!"

Mr. Bantison, who had been fiercely elbowing his way toward them, joined heads with them. "You may well say he is in," he exclaimed, "and if you want to know where, why, in yonder card room. I saw him through the half-open door."

"What's to be done?" asked the Beau.

"Send the bailiffs!"

"Fie, fie! A file of bailiffs? The scandal!"

"Then listen to me," said the Duke. "I'll select half a dozen gentlemen, explain the matter, and we'll put him in the center of us and take him out to the bailiffs. 'Twill appear nothing. Do you remain here and keep the attention of Beaujolais and de Mirepoix. Come, Bantison, fetch Townbrake and Harry Rakell yonder; I'll bring the others."

Three minutes later, his Grace of Winterset flung wide the card room door, and, after his friends had entered, closed it.

"Ah!" remarked M. Beaucaire quietly. "Six more large men."

The Duke, seeing Lady Mary, started; but the angry signs of her interview had not left her face, and reassured him. He offered his hand to conduct her to the door. "May I have the honor?"

"If this is to be known, 'twill be better if I leave after; I should be observed if I went now."

"As you will, madam," he answered, not displeased. "And now, you impudent villain," he began, turning to M. Beaucaire, but to fall back astounded. "Od's blood, the dog hath murdered and robbed some royal prince!" He forgot Lady Mary's presence in his excitement. "Lay hands on him!" he shouted. "Tear those orders from him!"

Molyneux threw himself between. "One word!" he cried. "One word before you offer an outrage you will repent all your lives!"

"Or let M. de Winterset come alone," laughed M. Beaucaire.

"Do you expect me to fight a cut-throat barber, and with bare hands?"

"I think one does not expect monsieur to fight anybody. Would I fight you, you think? That was why I had my servants, that evening we play. I would gladly fight almos' any one in the world; but I did not wish to soil my hand with a—"

"Stuff his lying mouth with his orders!" shouted the Duke.

But Molyneux still held the gentlemen back. "One moment," he cried.

"M. de Winterset," said Beaucaire, "of what are you afraid? You calculate well. Beaucaire might have been belief—an imposter that you yourself expose? Never! But I was not goin' reveal that secret. You have not absolve me of my promise."

"Tell what you like," answered the Duke. "Tell all the wild lies you have time for. You have five minutes to make up your mind to go quietly."

"Now you absolve me, then? Ha, ha! Oh, yes! Mademoiselle," he bowed to Lady Mary, "I have the honor to request you leave the room. You shall miss no details if these frien's of yours kill me, on the honor of a French gentleman."

"A French what?" laughed Bantison.

"Do you dare keep up the pretense?" cried Lord Townbrake. "Know, you villain barber, that your master, the Marquis de Mirepoix is in the next room."

Molyneux heaved a great sigh of relief. "Shall I—?" He turned to M. Beaucaire.

The young man laughed, and said: "Tell him come here at once."

"Impudent to the last!" cried Bantison, as Molyneux hurried from the room.

"Now you goin' to see M. Beaucaire's master," said Beaucaire to Lady Mary. "'Tis true what I say, the other night. I cross from France in his

suite; my passport say as his barber. Then to pass the ennui of exile, I come to Bath and play for what one will. It kill the time. But when the people hear I have been a servant they come only secretly; and there is one of them—he has absolve' me of a promise not to speak—of him I learn something he cannot wish to be tol'. I make some trouble to learn this thing. Why I should do this? Well—that is my own rizzon. So I make this man help me in a masque, the unmasking it was, for, as there is no one to know me, I throw off my black wig and become myself—and so I am 'Chateaurien,' Castle No-where. Then this man I use, this Winterset, he—"

"I have great need to deny these accusations?" said the Duke.

"Nay," said Lady Mary wearily.

"Shall I tell you why I mus' be 'Victor' and 'Beaucaire' and 'Chateaurien,' and not myself?"

"To escape from the bailiffs for debts for razors and soap," gibed Lord Townbrake.

"No, monsieur. In France I have got a cousin who is a man with a very bad temper at some time, and he will never enjoy his relatives to do what he does not wish—"

He was interrupted by a loud commotion from without. The door was flung open, and the young Count of Beaujolais bounded in and threw his arms about the neck of M. Beaucaire.

"Philippe!" he cried. "My brother, I have come to take you back with me."

M. de Mirepoix followed him, bowing as a courtier, in deference; but M. Beaucaire took both his hands heartily. Molyneux came after, with Mr. Nash, and closed the door.

"My warmest felicitations," said the Marquis. "There is no longer need for your incognito."

"Thou best of masters!" said Beaucaire, touching him fondly on the shoulder. "I know. Your courier came safely. And so I am forgiven! But I forget." He turned to the lady. She had begun to tremble exceedingly. "Faires' of all the English fair," he said, as the gentlemen bowed low to her deep courtesy, "I beg the honor to presen' to Lady Mary Carlisle, M. le Comte de Beaujolais. M. de Mirepoix has already the honor. Lady Mary has been very kind to me, my frien's; you mus' help me to make my acknowledgment. Mademoiselle and gentlemen, will you give me that favor to detain you one instan'?"

(Continued on Tenth Page)

Florida Editors on the Gumocracy Boycott

Last week's Jacksonville Sun is full of the fight between it and the Naval Stores combine, and in the spaces once filled with ads but taken out through the influence of the Naval Stores men, prints "In Memoriams." Fight it to a finish, L'Engle, if it takes all winter.—Gainesville Elevator.

Editor L'Engle stirred up a hornet's nest when he published in The Sun the story of "Gum." The power of money has never been more shamefully displayed than the appearance of The Sun last week, which contained many headstones erected to the memory of advertisements which had been appearing in the spaces, but which, because of the "Gum" story, had been peremptorily discontinued.—Madison New Enterprise.

Fifteen ads were removed from the columns of The Sun (L'Engle's and Taylor's paper) last week, because they (The Sun) would not "bow the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift might follow fawning." Well, brothers, we've been boycotted once ourselves, but today the Index is stronger than it ever was, and it has the satisfaction of seeing the ideas that it advanced and for which it was boycotted adopted by practically a unanimous vote of the citizens of Lake City. The Sun adopted the policy of

the Index: "If it's right, print it; no matter who it hurts." The Index suggests that a list of the firms that boycotted The Sun be kept standing in all the papers of the State, with the request that the people allow it to work the other way.—Lake City Index.

The Sun, Jacksonville's bright weekly, has plunged into a sea of trouble by daring to say some things about certain turpentine operators' schemes. Only the rich can afford to be brave, dear brother. Sometimes the poor dare, but they must be able to do their own drudgery and live on grits if they survive. And we wonder sometimes if the dear public, whose cause the brave editors espouse, are, after all, worth the sacrifice, for they seldom appreciate it at its full value.—Arcadia Champion.

The Jacksonville Sun last week makes the editorial announcement that a number of its advertisers have been forced to drop out by threats of a boycott from the turpentine interests if they did not do so, and backs it up with a copy of a letter from the proprietor of the Aragon Hotel to that effect. If this allegation be true, things have come to a pretty pass, and The Sun will be the gainer in the long run if it has the backing

to hold on with. The matter that The Sun alleges brought this about was the disclosure last week of what purported to be the inner history of the deal whereby the Export Company, which was the company organized by the operators, was knocked out of business by the naval stores trust. Such actions will go far to convince the people who had their money in the Export Company of a sell-out, a thing that was more than hinted at during the recent meeting in Jacksonville.—DeFuniak Breeze.

The Jacksonville Sun is now being boycotted by a number of the business men of that city. The boycott was brought about by the naval stores operators as a punishment for publishing an article two weeks ago. The Sun claims that an agent of the operators went around to the various advertisers and demanded that they take their advertisements out of the paper. Several complied with the request, and The Sun filled in the spaces made vacant by withdrawing the advertisements by "erecting monuments sacred to the memory of," etc. This is probably Claude L'Engle's first experience with a boycott.

The boycott is an old weapon in Volusia county and has been used against The News for lo these many years.